



Committee: House Health

Bill Number: HB1087

Date: March 4, 2026

Position: Favorable

Dear Chair Bagnall, Vice-Chair Cullison, and members of the House Health Committee,

The Maryland Nurses Association urges a **Favorable Report on HB1087**.

Surgical smoke is a well-documented but often overlooked occupational hazard in operating rooms. Created by the thermal destruction of tissue during surgical procedures, surgical smoke contains toxic chemical compounds, blood and tissue particles, and viruses such as HPV. These toxic chemical compounds include benzene, a known carcinogen for which there is no safe level of exposure.

The average daily impact of surgical smoke on the surgical team is the equivalent of inhaling the smoke of 27-30 unfiltered cigarettes. Despite the widespread availability of effective and low-cost smoke evacuation technologies, many hospitals do not consistently use these systems. A 2023 national survey by Association of periOperative Registered Nurses found that while 94% of respondents said their facilities had smoke evacuation equipment, only 26% reported consistent use.

HB 1087 offers a simple, evidence-based solution: requiring health care facilities to adopt policies to mitigate exposure to surgical smoke through the use of a smoke evacuation system. This legislation protects not only perioperative nurses and surgical teams, but also patients.

19 other states have enacted legislation to address the issue of surgical smoke, and it is time for Maryland to do the same. The Maryland Hospital Association is neutral on this legislation, and we have encountered no opposition to the legislation. HB1087 will meaningfully improve the lives of essential workers that comes with zero cost and has zero opposition. We urge a favorable report on HB1087

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jamie DeMarco". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jamie DeMarco

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